CLAIMS

1. A microwave communication network that overlays a public switched telephone network comprising:

a plurality of microwave transceivers forming a microwave network, said transceivers being geographically located so as to provide a wireless interoffice facility (IOF) between two or more central offices, tandem switches or other premises controlled by an incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC).

2. The microwave communication network as in claim 1 wherein one or more of said microwave transceivers is located proximate to one or more of said central offices, tandem switches or other premises.

3. The microwave communication network as in claim 1 wherein said ILEC provides insufficient wireline bandwidth between two or more of said central offices, tandem switches or other premises, and said microwave network provides wireless bandwidth as an alternative communication path.

4. The microwave communication network as in claim 1 wherein said wireless IOF provides redundancy to said public switched telephone network.

5. The microwave communication network as in claim 1 wherein said wireless IOF provides bandwidth at a lower cost than said public switched telephone network.

6. The microwave communication network as in claim 1 wherein said wireless IOF provides service which is complementary to that provided by said public switched telephone network.

7. A method of providing wireless bandwidth in a microwave network which overlays a public switched telephone network comprising the steps of:

(1) forming a microwave network from a plurality of microwave transceivers;

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(2) geographically arranging said transceivers so as to provide wireless interoffice facility (IOF) between two or more central offices, tandem switches or other premises controlled by an incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC).

8. A microwave communication network that overlays a public switched telephone network comprising:

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a plurality of microwave transceivers forming a microwave network, said transceivers being geographically located so as to provide a wireless interoffice facility (IOF) between one or more central offices, tandem switches or other premises controlled by an incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC) and one or more central offices, tandem switches or other premises controlled by a common carrier other than said ILEC.

9. The microwave communication network as in claim 8 wherein one or more of said microwave transceivers is located proximate to one or more of said central offices, tandem switches or other premises.

10. The microwave communication network as in claim 8 wherein said ILEC provides insufficient wireline bandwidth between two or more of its central offices, tandem switches or other premises, and said microwave network provides wireless bandwidth as an alternative communication path.

11. The microwave communication network as in claim 8 wherein said wireless IOF provides redundancy to said public switched telephone network.

12. The microwave communication network as in claim 8 wherein said wireless IOF provides bandwidth at a lower cost than said public switched telephone network.

13. The microwave communication network as in claim 8 wherein said wireless IOF provides service which is complementary to that provided by said public switched telephone network.

14. A method of providing wireless bandwidth in a microwave network which overlays a public switched telephone network comprising the steps of:

(1) forming a microwave network from a plurality of microwave transceivers;

(2) geographically arranging said transceivers so as to provide wireless interoffice facility (IOF) between one or more central offices, tandem switches or other premises controlled by an incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC) and one or more central offices, tandem switches or other premises controlled by a common carrier other than said ILEC.